



Gregory J. Nickels,
Mayor
City of Seattle

PRO PARKS LEVY

800 Maynard Ave S., 3rd Floor
Seattle, WA 98134-1336
www.cityofseattle.net/parks/proparks/

ORCHARD STREET RAVINE IMPROVEMENTS

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN (VMP) WORKSHOP #2 - SUMMARY

JUNE 1, 2006 6:30 TO ~~8 P.M.~~ 9 P.M.

**Please note, additional comments or questions about the Draft VMP are due
June 22, 2006.**

An anonymous limerick was provided for the meeting opener:

*The time has come for the Ravine
To change the way that it's seen
We'll get down on our knees
To raise up the trees
And make it more than just green*

There were 11 attendees, and Staff and the VMP Consultant.

Goals for the evening were to learn more about the VMP and discuss implementation priorities and provide an update on the lower loop trail plan improvements.

Marcia Fischer, restoration ecologist explained the overall organization of the VMP based around the four management units: Remnant Douglas fir-Madrone forest, Blackberry Thicket, Blackberry Thicket Steep, and Disturbed Sandy Soils. Within these management units, similar existing conditions are present and similar "prescriptions" for better health are indicated.

In order to spend the most time discussing priorities, we did not go into great detail about the analysis data which is provided in the plan, and moved directly on to discuss priorities for restoration work. The priorities presented at the meeting and in the draft are based on two major criteria: what is most adversely affecting the site presently, and what will become a bigger problem in the future if we don't address it sooner? As requested at the 1st workshop, costs were identified for each restoration activity. An additional consideration in the ranking of restoration activities in the DRAFT VMP is to perform work that would cost less now due to reduced site impacts (ie. Snagging of alder or poplar is done more easily when crews don't need to avoid new plants).

Karen Galt presented the overall budget context in order to introduce the fact that the VMP plan has more prescriptions than can be funded by this project. The life of this open space and our stewardship of it will continue long into the future. There is currently a Pro Parks Levy project at this location. The \$175,295 budget is allocated to plan, design and develop a trail access to the ravine including parking and signage, and to design and construct an irrigation system, which will ease the early restoration labor effort and improve plant survival and growth rates. This budget also provides funding for development of the VMP, which will guide current and future management activities; remaining funds are available to implement high priority restoration activities, as funding allows. As noted above, the estimates provided are conservative and can be



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further off-set by increased volunteer activity and by combining restoration activities that non-volunteer crews are needed to perform.

There was a concern expressed regarding the allocation of the budget to the different phases and tasks. It should be noted that compared to typical development projects, this budget is not large while still requiring the same baseline level of management, meetings, design and reviews; thus overall percentages for these items are higher than a larger project. During the planning phase, there were significant staff and project costs incurred to respond to the extensive community feedback. In addition, the "design" component is addressing two areas, the VMP and site development, rather than a typical single construction plan. Also, extending the timeline of the project will increase associated staff time.

Much of the discussion on restoration priorities was around the extent and efficacy of blackberry removal. The VMP recommends removing all blackberry at the same early time in order to consolidate mobilization costs and get the blackberry areas started sooner on the road to a more diverse contribution to the ecosystem. A proposal was suggested to postpone the Blackberry Thicket Steep phase in order to relieve funds for other restoration activities on the list. Finally we took a vote and 6 or 7 were in favor of all the blackberries at once, and 3 were in favor of a phased approach.

The group also spent some time discussing two significant tree actions related to the Lombardy poplar and large Red alder. It is recommended that they both have one of the following occur: 1) complete removal, 2) snagged, 3) or near-term maintenance for deadwood, then plan for future removal or snagging. The alder will eventually become a hazard tree once "targets" are developed near it (ie. Parking and trail access). The poplar will be an ongoing maintenance issue while new plants are establishing near it. Most attendees felt that snagging was a preferred approach, however some would like more time to consider the options.

There was some discussion around the lower loop trail development plan which includes an accessible loop to the west, which will support restoration work and a smaller loop to the east. There was sentiment expressed that the west loop of the trail is not desired because it will only access a portion of the site that is going to be a cleared blackberry thicket, and then a slowly growing (and therefore "uninteresting") restoration area. The use of money to develop a trail in this part of the site was viewed as a waste of resources by some attendees. There was concern that the loop to the east does not provide enough experience of a quality part of the site and would like to see it extended. There is inherent and necessary flexibility in trail development in settings like this, and as the Through-trail Feasibility Study is completed, this section of trail can be reviewed and respond to the findings of that study.



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OVERALL PROJECT SCHEDULE

PLANNING, INPUT AND DECISION MAKING	TIMELINE
1st Public Workshop* – Introduction, information gathering, discussion of potential objectives, typical best management practices (BMPs) and restoration techniques	May 6, 2006 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
<i>Due date for additional comments</i>	<i>May 20, 2006</i>
2nd Public Workshop* – Presentation of Draft VMP, discussion of priorities for projects; Update on loop trail	June 1, 2006 6:30 to 8 p.m.
<i>Due date for additional comments</i>	<i>June 22, 2006</i>
ProView – Parks internal review, approval and on-going monitoring of project progress	June/July 2006
3rd Public Workshop* – Presentation of Final VMP; Update on through-trail feasibility study	July 13, 2006 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Final VMP available for distribution	End of July 2006
ProView Technical Review for loop trail construction	July/August 2006
ON THE GROUND ACTION!	<i>(dates are proposed, may change)</i>
First phase of restoration work	August – Sept. 2006
Initial trail and infrastructure construction	August – Sept. 2006
First phase of planting work	Sept. – Nov. 2006
Future phases	2007 to TBD

*All workshops will be held at High Point CC, 6920 34th Ave SW.

Send additional comments to:

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or e-mail karen.galt@seattle.gov, or call: 206-684-7104